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ABSTRACT

The objectives and course description of a one-credit high school French course intended for the first year of Newfoundland senior high schools are presented. Its major objectives relate to development of language skills in four areas (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), attitudinal development, and cultural understanding. The major grammatical points include aspects of the past perfect, relative pronouns, the pronoun "en," and the verb "prendre" as they complement development of the four skill areas. Geographical and cultural information about a region of Quebec is presented in a reader, supplemented by teacher-selected materials and content. Some materials are suggested. The philosophy of instruction in Newfoundland and Labrador French programs is outlined, and recommended instructional methodology, texts, and student evaluation techniques for each skill area and the affective objective are included. (MSE)

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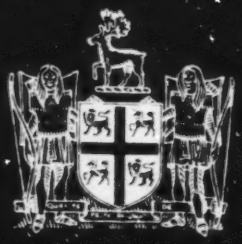

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Course Description

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French 2100

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Department Of Education

Division of Instruction

Authorized by the Minister

FRENCH 2100

COURSE DESCRIPTION

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AUTHORIZED BY THE MINISTER

MAY, 1981

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INTRODUCTION

Since the early days of education in this province, second-language teaching has held a prominent place in our school curriculum. Initially, a modern or classical language was regarded as a necessary part of a well-rounded education; consequently, several languages, particularly Latin and French, were part of the general education offered to students. Today, with the shift in emphasis towards the teaching of modern languages and the designation of French as an official language of Canada, the focus in second-language teaching in Newfoundland and Labrador is almost totally on French.

In present-day Newfoundland and Labrador, a knowledge of both official languages is very desirable for all students. Study of a second language is, first and foremost, an enriching educational experience, long recognized for its significant contribution to the social, emotional, and intellectual development of students. In addition to its significant educational value, French, as an official language of Canada, is a skill that all students should have the opportunity to develop, should they desire to do so.

OBJECTIVES FOR FRENCH WITHIN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Presently, there are three well-known types of curriculum organization in French: immersion, extended French, and regular

French. The regular French program is the most basic in terms of the instructional time allocated to it and the linguistic, attitudinal, and cultural objectives it sets out to achieve. It is also the most common type of second-language program in our schools, involving the teaching of French as a subject one period per day.

The regular French program in the schools of Newfoundland and Labrador endeavours to provide students with a basic knowledge of the second language and to have them apply their new-developed linguistic proficiency. It also sets out to develop an awareness and an appreciation of French culture, with particular attention to French Canada. Concisely stated, the objectives of the regular French program are as follows:[1]

1. to provide students with a fundamental knowledge of the language - its grammar, pronunciation, and idiom, an active vocabulary of 3000 - 5000 words, and about 100 basic sentence patterns;

2. to provide students with sufficient oral competency to make themselves understood in conversations;

3. to prepare students to read with the aid of a dictionary, standard texts on subjects within their interest;

4. to prepare students to write letters and free compositions with clarity and correctness;

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1. Adapted from Ministry of Education, Ontario: Teaching and Learning French as a Second Language, April 8, 1977.

5. to provide students with a basic knowledge and an appreciation of the culture and aspiration of French-speaking Canadians;

6. to prepare students to resume the study of French in later life if the desire or need arises.

The French program, in the schools of Newfoundland and Labrador, contributes to the attainment of a range of objectives listed under Category B in the Handbook for Senior High Schools. The objectives from Category B, of particular significance to the study of a second language, are as follows:

I. To develop students' understanding of language and thus improve their basic skills in English,

II. To develop students mentally by providing the unique challenge of a second language,

III. To develop tolerance on the part of students of ideas, customs, and ways of thought different from their own,

IV. To develop an interest in cultural activities which can contribute to the fulfillment of the students' leisure time,

V. To provide students with the opportunity to become familiar with careers requiring second-language compentence,

VI. To develop students' understanding of the cultural diversity of Canada.

OBJECTIVES FOR FRENCH 2100

French 2100 is a one-credit course which may be taken during a full year or it may be paired with French 2101, both

courses being offered in a single year. Ideally, French 2100 would be studied during the students' first year of Senior High School.

It is important that all second-language instruction, including French 2100, strive to promote cultural understanding and to foster the development of student attitudes. Cultural understanding is an inherent part of language instruction and it usually serves to enhance the students' motivation to learn another language. In French 2100, cultural instruction should provide students with an awareness of the way of life of francophones and also offer them a societal context for application of their linguistic knowledge.

Closely related to cultural understanding, the second-language class should foster an enthusiastic and constructive attitude on the part of students. This requires a variety of class activities of differing levels of difficulty which permit all students to experience success occasionally.

The major objectives for French 2100 then relate to the development of skills and attitudes and to the acquisition of cultural knowledge. The following list presents the objectives according to each of these headings.

I. SKILL DEVELOPMENT

A. Listening Comprehension

1. To understand fully spoken French consisting of lexical items and structures previously met in the course.

2. To identify and understand course content whatever the context, despite the use of unfamiliar lexical items and structures.

B. Speaking

1. To converse with others on prepared topics within the realm of common experience.

C. Reading

1. To read in French, with full comprehension, passages containing familiar vocabulary and structures.

2. Given contextual clues, to infer meaning from new unfamiliar materials.

3. With the aid of a dictionary, to read standard texts which do not present stylistic difficulties.

D. Writing

1. To write short passages using correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

II. ATTITUDINAL DEVELOPMENT

1. To develop a respect for and tolerance of differences among people.

III. CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

1. To develop an awareness of and appreciation for the French cultural heritage in Canada.

COURSE CONTENT

In French 2100, a series of situations are used to introduce the linguistic content of the course. Relevant vocabulary and language patterns are presented in a controlled manner to provide students with the knowledge necessary to discuss, read, and write about the topics presented. The major grammatical points dealt with, in the course, are as follows:

A. Passé Composé

1. Regular verbs
2. Negative
3. Pronoun object + passé composé
4. Irregular verbs
5. Agreement of past participle
6. Verbs with être

B. Relative pronouns: qui, que

C. Pronoun: en

D. Prendre

The grammatical explanations in French 2100 are intended to complement the development of the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Since these sections are included, first and foremost as student reference, students should understand that they are responsible for them and should consult the contents of these sections, as necessary.

At regular intervals, French 2100 provides for additional practice of grammatical points plus a review of linguistic content from earlier levels of the French program. The course also contains a variety of activities which require students to apply their newly-developed language skills. Where students

have difficulty with the basic linguistic content, it is recommended that they do further practice from the sections provided for that purpose. For students who master the linguistic content quickly, it is recommended that they devote additional time to the language-use activities. For all language-use activities, it should be noted that selection of a limited number of activities for indepth treatment is more desirable than a superficial treatment of all items.

The course content of French 2100 also includes a reader which provides geographical and cultural information about a region in the province of Québec.

ENRICHMENT

Both the areas of culture and reading require that the teacher introduce resource materials to complement course content. While French 2100 does include a cultural reader, ideally, the teaching of culture should be left to the individual teacher who would integrate relevant cultural information into the course at appropriate points. In some instances, intensive and extensive reading can be combined with the presentation of cultural content. A list of suggested enrichment materials for both the areas of culture and reading is as follows:

Heath Structured French Reading Series by Morgan Kenney
Collection Echos du Québec by Robert McConnell, et. al.

Passeport au Plaisir by Morgan Kenney and Dieter Euler
Collection Lire by Robert McConnell and Yves Fouchereau
- Principal Authors

Intrigue En France, Intrigue En Suisse by Robert McConnell
Collection Figures du Québec by Gabrielle Pascal and André Smith
Visitons et Explorons by Rebecca Ullman, et. al.
Bienvenue à Montréal by Rebecca Ullman, et. al.
Carrières Bilingues: Le Monde des Affaires by M. Laing
and Rebecca Ullman

De Chez Nous by Rebecca Ullman and M. Balchunas
Devant le Micro I by Rebecca Ullman, et. al.
Le Français Parlé au Canada by Rebecca Ullman and M. Balchunas
Le Temps des Fêtes by Rebecca Ullman and J. Howard
Le Hockey by M. Balchunas and Rebecca Ullman

The above list is but a sampling of the resource materials available for the topics of culture and reading. Teachers should select from these and any others they deem suitable.

PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

The French program in the schools of Newfoundland and Labrador is founded on the belief that English-speaking students removed from any direct French influence can experience success and have a feeling of achievement in learning French.

Learning a language is a matter of motivation, interest, and attitude and involves the development of cultural understanding and the acquisition of skills. A successful French program requires an interested teacher who is prepared to rely on references and other sources for course content, particularly in the area of culture. The teacher's approach in second-language instruction is crucial as students must, at once, be challenged to expand their knowledge and skills but

not overtaxed to the point of frustration or confusion. Mastery of second-language skills requires considerable practice and opportunity for use; the teacher should plan practice of required vocabulary and language patterns through a variety of activities and thus avoid boredom. Students should also have reasonable opportunities to apply their new language abilities in creative and imaginative ways.

French 2100 develops the second-language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, with an orientation towards oral communication in common, everyday situations. French should be the language of the class as much as possible because the classroom may likely be the students' only opportunity for contact with the language. Instructional time is also too valuable and too important a factor in student progress to be expended on long discussions in English. This is not to imply that English should never be used in the classroom - English can provide quick clarification of a point that might otherwise involve a lengthy time-consuming explanation in French.

In the aural-oral presentation of a lesson, which requires great mental concentration by students, new content should be supported by visuals to facilitate comprehension. Meaning can be conveyed in a variety of ways: a simple comparison or synonym, a picture, a projectual, or reference to a situation. It should be remembered that meaning is, to some

extent, determined by the context in which a word or expression is used. It should also be noted that many French words and expressions have no direct English equivalents and vice-versa.

The presence of a warm, supportive atmosphere is very important to second-language learning. Classroom activities should foster a sense of accomplishment and security and students should be encouraged to express themselves in French.

RECOMMENDED METHODOLOGY

The present methodology for skill development in second-language teaching is an adaptation of the phases that children pass through in acquiring their first language. In first language acqusition, children go through a long phase of listening before they consciously begin to imitate the speech of adults. After a few years of practice and use, children's speech is usually sufficiently advanced to undertake development of reading and finally writing, both of which occur during the first years of schooling.

Second-language teaching should replicate the sequence of first-language skill development; however, the time span between the introduction and practice of skills should be as short as possible. In second-language teaching, it is now generally accepted that new vocabulary and language patterns should be approached as follows:

- introduced aurally (with support materials)
- practised as an oral exercise

- reinforced by recognition reading
- consolidated through written practice
- applied creatively in situations

The skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing should be introduced and practiced in the order presented to capitalize on their interrelatedness and thereby facilitate student mastery.

The reader in French 2100 is recommended to be read mainly for comprehension. A suggested approach is to provide students with questions to guide them as they read through the story on their own. After completion of the initial reading, the questions would serve as a basis for oral discussion and written work.

PRESCRIBED TEXTS

- Passeport Français 5 (Dis Donc!)
- Aventure En Gaspésie (cultural reader)

EVALUATION

Evaluation should be a continuous process and should include the assessment of cognitive, skill and affective outcomes. Testing in French 2100 should reflect the specific objectives of the course and the amount of time devoted to each in the teaching process. Students should be given sufficient notice about the administration of tests and should be informed of the content to be tested. Directions for each question type should be stated clearly and examples provided for further clarification.

The assessment of students' proficiency in the skills of listening, reading and writing is fairly straight-forward in that it can be done by administering tests to whole classes. Oral proficiency, on the other hand, must be tested on an individual basis and is best done by means of an interview. It is recommended that teachers carry out interviews of all students in French at least twice yearly in accordance with the guidelines for oral evaluation set down by the Department of Education.

The following is a list of some recommended testing techniques for the skills of listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing.

Listening

1. Students hear a sentence employing one of three forms of a word listed on the students' paper. The students select the correct form.

   Example: (a) s'habiller
   (b) s'est habillée
   (c) s'habille

   Students hear: Elle vient de s'habiller. They circle (a) because it is the form of the word they heard.

2. Students must determine whether a sentence they hear is a question, statement or a command.

3. Students distinguish between true/ false statements. These may relate to a dialogue, be based on projectuals or may be general statements.

4. Students answer multiple choice questions. These may be individual questions based on short passages or they may relate to aspects of projectuals.

5. Students write a dictée.

Speaking

1. Students do oral work involving mastery of specific points, i.e. pronunciation, elision, liaison, intonation.

2. Students answer short questions based on projectuals.

3. Students present a dialogue from memory.

4. Students answer relevant general questions.

5. Students give a short talk or describe a picture, prepared in advance.

Reading

1. In silent reading, students select words that have the same sounds.

2. Students select best answer to a question from three possible answers.

3. Students answer multiple choice questions on passage.

4. Students select multiple choice answers which involve correct sentence completions.

5. Students write complete answers, in French, to questions based on a passage.

Writing

1. Students answer multiple choice grammatical items.

2. Given an answer, students write the question.

3. Students rewrite sentences changing tenses, pronouns, plurals, etc.

4. Students write answers to questions in French.

5. Students write a guided composition on a given situation.

For affective outcomes, the teacher can select from a variety of evaluation techniques: interviews, survery, questionnaires, and rating scales to name a few. A rating scale is a very useful instrument for keeping a record of relative student growth. The rating scale would ideally include a range from above average to below average for such areas as participation, respect for others, tolerance of differences among peoples, interest in French culture, and an awareness of French Canada. By rating student progress in the affective area, the teacher can maintain a record of student growth which could be inserted into the term report, if so desired.

The specific techniques recommended in this course description for skills' evaluation are not all inclusive. Teachers should make use of other evaluation instruments and question types that are suitable for their purposes.